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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 08/28/07

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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, August 27

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 28, 2007

08:53

Met at party headquarters with Foreign Minister Aso, Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Nikai, and Deputy Secretary General Ishihara. Joined by Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Suga, Secretary General Nakagawa, Party Ethics Committee Chairman

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Sasagawa, and Executive Council Chairman Niha.

10:03

Attended a special Executive Council meeting. Posed for a photo with

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new executive members. Later, attended an executive meeting.

11:03

Arrived at the Kantei.

13:03

Attended a special cabinet meeting. Followed by former Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Suga.

15:33

Met New Komeito President Ota, with new Secretary General Aso and New Komeito Secretary General Kitagawa present. Later, met Aso, Upper House Chairman Otsuji, Ota and others. Had new cabinet members join them.

17:03

Met Special Advisor Yamatani. Then met Special Advisor Nakayama.

19:01

Attended an informal representation at the Imperial Palace. Later, attended an imperial attestation ceremony for the new cabinet members.

21:00

Gave a press conference at the Kantei. Issued official appointments to the cabinet members. Attended the first cabinet meeting.

2:05

Posed for a photo with the new cabinet members.

22:27 Returned to his official residence.

4) New Abe cabinet launched, Yosano as chief cabinet secretary, Masuzoe as health and welfare minister; All-party approach emphasized

NIKKEI (Top play) (Full)  
August 28, 2007

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe inaugurated a new cabinet last night, appointing influential lawmakers as key ministers. For instance, Kaoru Yosano, a veteran lawmaker known as a policy expert, was named chief cabinet secretary, and House of Councilors policy chief Yoichi Masuzoe, who has been critical of Abe, was appointed as health, labor and welfare minister in charge of pension and other issues. The appointments of factional leaders to major cabinet posts apparently reflect Abe's effort to achieve unanimity in the party. Although Abe is aiming to revamp his administration with the new cabinet lineup, whether or not he can settle mounting outstanding

issues and regain momentum remains to be seen, given the opposition-controlled Upper House.

In hopes of doing away with the widely criticized "clubby" image of his first cabinet, Abe this time has given key cabinet posts to experienced, veteran lawmakers, appointing Nobutaka Machimura who heads his own faction as foreign minister, Masahiko Komura who also heads his own faction as defense minister, and Fukushima Nukaga, who is deputy chief of the Tsushima faction, as finance minister. Abe has also decided to retain Education, Science and Technology Minister Bunmei Ibuki who heads his own faction.

Yasuhisa Shiozaki, Abe's close aide who served as chief cabinet

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secretary, has not joined the new cabinet, and the number of prime

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ministerial advisors has also been reduced from the five to two.

Importance is placed on the government's efforts for addressing the pension issue and the growing socioeconomic disparities between urban and rural areas that contributed to the ruling bloc's crushing defeat in the July Upper House election. In view of popular will, the prime minister has appointed Masuzoe, who has repeatedly criticized Abe, as health, labor and welfare minister. Former Iwate governor Hiroya Masuda was also named internal affairs and communications minister and state minister in charge of correcting regional disparities to push ahead with decentralization.

Only two have joined the new cabinet from the private sector -- Masuda and Hiroko Ota, who will continue to serve as state minister in charge of economic and fiscal policy. The new cabinet also includes only two female members -- Ota and Yoko Kamikawa, who has become state minister in charge declining birthrate.

In addition, five will retain their posts, including Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Akira Amari, Construction and Transport Minister Tetsuzo Fuyushiba, and State Minister in Charge of financial Policy and Administrative Reform Yoshimi Watanabe. The number of new faces which was 11 when the Abe cabinet was first launched last September has dropped to seven.

In terms of the number of posts assigned to factions, the Tsushima faction has the most with three, followed by the Koga and Yamasaki factions with two each. Previously, the Machimura faction held four posts, but it now holds only one. No one from the Tanigaki faction has joined the new cabinet.

5) Abe determined to fire cabinet ministers unable to fulfill accountability regarding "politics-and-money" issue, give more consideration to regional disparities

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Abridged slightly)  
August 28, 2007

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, after reshuffling his cabinet, held a press conference last night at the Kantei (Prime Minister's Official Residence). The prime minister expressed his determination to revamp his administration, stating: "In order to restore public trust in politics and the government, I will do my best with the new cabinet ministers and to make achievements." About his response to the question of money and politics, Abe indicated that he would discharge those who fail to fulfill their accountability, saying: "The new cabinet ministers are ready to quit if they cannot offer appropriate explanations."

Abe also made it clear that he would place high priority on addressing the issue of growing disparities between urban and rural areas, saying: "Politics must give more consideration to this problem, and that is what we have learned from the July House of Councillors election. We must consider ways to alleviate pain associated with reform. We must work harder than before."

At the same time, Abe emphasized that he would continue with his reform policy course, noting: "Reform is essential for Japan. I will

continue to pursue reform no matter how difficult it may be." Abe also made this statement about his administration's basic policy lines, such as breaking away from the postwar regime: "We will

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review the postwar system by returning to the starting point."

He also revealed a plan to revise relevant legislation to establish strict rules to deal with the question of politics and money, saying: "We will work hard to increase transparency. We will have to revise the Political Funds Control Law."

6) Prime Minister Abe: "Beautiful country" policy remains unchanged

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 29) (Slightly abridged)  
August 28, 2007

In a press conference at the Prime Minister's Office starting at 9:00 p.m., Prime Minister Abe in a morning suit said in a calm tone: "I reorganized my cabinet in order to restart reforms to create a 'beautiful country,' a 'new country.'" He had not referred to "beautiful country" in the public since his party suffered a crushing defeat in the July House of Councillors election.

Reflecting on the fact that his "beautiful country" policy, represented by constitutional revision, was not understood by the people, the prime minister had sealed this policy in effect. His first reference to the policy after many days supposedly was intended to underline that he has made no policy switch. Regarding his slogan of "emerging from the postwar regime," as well, at which even Liberal Democratic Party members lashed out, Abe stressed: "There is no change in my intention to review such postwar systems as the education and public servant ones."

Upon saying: "Politicians should have given more consideration to the disparities between central and local governments," the prime minister emphasized: "In order to ease the pains from reforms, we must make more efforts than before."

The prime minister also included the wording "beautiful country, Japan" in a statement adopted in the first cabinet meeting held afterward, as well as in the new cabinet's policy guidelines.

7) Question of extension of antiterrorism law likely to be first challenge for reshuffled Abe cabinet

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Excerpts) (Full)  
August 28, 2007

The first hurdle for the reshuffled Abe cabinet will be the upcoming extraordinary session of the Diet to be opened next month. The focus of debate in the extraordinary Diet session will be the question of extending the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, which expires on Nov. 1. The government and the ruling parties want to extend the law by revising it, but the major opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto), the first party in the Upper House, has made clear its opposition to the extension. An intense battle between the ruling and opposition parties is bound to occur.

Nobuteru Ishihara, who yesterday assumed the post of chair of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) Policy Research Council, referred to that law at a press briefing and emphasized his attitude to consult with the DPJ on the law, telling reporters: "The question of extending the law concerns other countries' confidence in Japan. We'll fully explain the law in the Diet to make the public understand it. Some DPJ members are in favor of extending the law, so we want to discuss the law in detail with the DPJ."

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During the extraordinary Diet session after the LDP lost a majority of seats in the Upper House election in 1998, Ishihara worked at the forefront of promoting consultations with junior DPJ members in order to enact into law a set of bills intended for financial

revitalization. At the time he was dubbed as a new breed of policy-planners.

But, given that the DPJ now holds the key posts related to the conduct of proceedings in the Upper House like the president and the chair of the steering committee, Ishihara is likely to face much more difficulties in doing so than he did in 1998.

8) Defense chief implies revisions to antiterror law

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 28, 2007

Defense Minister Komura, meeting the press yesterday, indicated that he would be flexible about retouching a bill extending the Antiterror Special Measures Law. The leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto) is likely to call for the ruling coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and New Komeito to revise the legislation. "I think there also can be revisions," Komura said. He also said, "I'm not in a position to say there must be no revision." He added, "The cabinet is going to study whether to go on as is or whether to incorporate the DPJ's views."

9) Abduction issue to remain priority in regard to policy toward DPRK: Foreign Minister Machimura

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 28, 2007

The reshuffled Abe cabinet's focus in the foreign policy and security fields will be on North Korea's nuclear and abduction issues and bringing progress to the realignment of US Forces in Japan. Prime Minister Abe will aim at pursuing vocal diplomacy with the appointment of Nobutaka Machimura, chairman of the faction to which he belonged and whose political creed is close to his, as foreign minister. However, it is unclear whether Abe can shore up his administration using foreign and security policy, because all of pending issues in that area are thorny problems.

The foreign minister during a press conference after the first cabinet meeting yesterday evening stressed, "If the abduction issue makes progress, it would be possible for Japan to play a more positive role in such areas as economic and energy aid." He thus indicated his stance of abiding by the government's basic principle that there will be no aid without progress in the abduction issue.

Tokyo and Pyongyang are undertaking coordination with the possibility of holding a normalization working group meeting as agreed upon during the six-party chief delegates' meeting in July. The government is envisaging a strategy of eliciting a sincere response from Pyongyang regarding the abduction issue, even by putting the issue of settling past accounts on the negotiating table.

North Korea is persistently criticizing the prime minister for his hard-line stance. Washington and Pyongyang are visibly getting closer to each other over the nuclear issue. There is a growing mood

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at the six-party talks for giving priority to the nuclear issue. As such, bringing progress to the abduction issue will not be an easy job.

Another challenge is the realignment of US Forces in Japan, which includes the issue of relocating the US Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa Prefecture. The Defense Ministry on Aug. 7 submitted an environmental impact assessment method report, the first step of formal procedures for the relocation of the Futenma Air Station. The report included a facility plan for a steady implementation of the relocation scheme based on the Japan-US agreement.

However, the prefecture has withheld the acceptance of the report, demanding a revision of the Japan-US agreement. Relations between the government and Okinawa Prefecture have become strained, giving rise to a secret deal rumor that former Defense Minister Yuriko

Koike sought understanding for the submission of the report in return for the dismissal of then Vice Defense Minister Takemasa Moriya, who had been taking a hard-line stance toward Okinawa.

In order to complete the relocation, it is absolutely necessary for the government to obtain understanding from the local community. Machimura and Defense Minister Masahiko Komura yesterday evening confirmed their determination to aim at bringing progress to the issue in cooperation.

10) New Abe cabinet takes critic Masuzoe into cabinet, aiming to erase image of "friend cabinet"

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 29) (Excerpts)  
August 28, 2007

The support rating for the administration remains at a low level since one cabinet member after another stepped down due to office-expense scandals and gaffes. Under such a situation, the new Abe cabinet was launched yesterday, about one month after the Liberal Democratic Party's historic defeat in the July House of Councillors election. Prime Minister Abe took lawmakers critical of his administration, as well as a former Iwate governor, into the cabinet in a bid to play up his determination to tackle the issue of disparities between urban and local areas. By appointing such lawmakers, the prime minister aims to erase the image of a "friend cabinet," but in on-the-street interviews, many expressed negative views about the new cabinet, with one saying: "It is intended to court public favor;" and another remarking: "It conveys no message." The prime minister stressed in an interview his determination to forge ahead with his reform plans, including building a "beautiful country," which was rejected by the voters in the Upper House election. New cabinet members, including LDP leading members, spoke in press conferences yesterday of their aspiration to make efforts to recover public trust, but it will be a tough "second challenge" for the prime minister.

Yoichi Masuzoe, who was sharply criticizing the Abe cabinet in the LDP, was appointed to head the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry. In a press conference after the announcement of the new cabinet lineup, Masuzoe made this explanation about why he accepted the offer from Prime Minister Abe: "It is now necessary for all party members to work together to reconstruct their party."

Whenever controversy over cabinet ministers' gaffes occurred,

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Masuzoe gave candid advice to the prime minister, saying: "If you keep silent, the people will leave you." When Abe expressed his intention to stay in power before the result of the count was announced in the earlier Upper House election, Masuzoe criticized the prime minister, saying: "He does not understand what society sees as common sense."

By getting Masuzoe into the cabinet, the Prime Minister's Office (Kantei) apparently aims to eliminate the image of a "cabinet being filled with the prime minister's close friends."

Some might say that Masuzoe was drawn into such a plot of the Kantei, but he emphasized: "(My words and deeds) do not stem from my personal feelings, such as that I dislike this or that minister or the prime minister."

All the more because he made up his mind to go into politics, based on his experience of taking care of his mother, he appears to be excited about attaining the top post for health, labor and welfare administration. He commented: "The government must correct what must be corrected, including the pension issue. Since such a role has been awarded to me, I will do my best. It will be my responsibility to the voters."

11) Three with no factional affiliation assume key cabinet portfolios

NIKKEI (Page 4) (Excerpts)  
August 28, 2007

The average age of ministers of the new Abe cabinet is 60.4, slightly younger than the 60.9 of the previous Abe cabinet, which was inaugurated last September. The youngest minister is Fumio Kishida, state minister in charge of Okinawa and Northern Territories, who is 50. Land, Infrastructure and Transport Minister Tetsuzo Fuyushiba, 71 years old, is the oldest minister in the reshuffled Abe cabinet.

The number of cabinet ministers (excluding the prime minister) is 17, which is the same as that of the first Abe cabinet. Of the 17 ministers, only one came from the New Komeito. The number from the private sector is two: Hiroko Ota, state minister in charge of economic and fiscal policy, and Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Hiroya Masuda. Female ministers are Ota and Yoko Kamikawa, state minister in charge of population and gender-equality issues.

Three ministers came from the Tsushima faction, giving that faction the largest number of cabinet seats. No Tsushima faction members were in the cabinet before Abe shuffled it because both Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma and Administrative Reform Minister Genichiro Sata had stepped down from their posts.

Three lawmakers who do not belong to any faction in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) were given cabinet portfolios. The three are Chief Cabinet Secretary Kaoru Yosano; Yoichi Masuzoe, health, labor and welfare minister -- responsible for pension system reform, including the pension record-keeping debacle; and Administrative Reform Minister Yoshimi Watanabe.

Abe appointed Nobutaka Machimura as foreign minister. Machimura is the only one member who assumed a cabinet post from the largest LDP faction, headed by Machimura. The Machimura faction did not get any

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LDP executive posts. The Koga faction got only two cabinet posts, decreasing from four.

Abe gave no cabinet post to the Tanigaki and Aso factions. However, there is a big difference in the situations between the Aso faction, whose leader, Taro Aso, became chief cabinet secretary, and the Tanigaki faction, which has never had a cabinet post under Abe. Both Aso and Tanigaki ran in the LDP presidential election last September. The Tanigaki faction has been treated unkindly in terms of Abe's appointments.

Number of cabinet ministers picked from LDP factions

Faction Number of cabinet ministers Increase or decrease from the first Abe cabinet  
Machimura 1 -3  
Tsushima 3 +1

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Koga 2 -2  
Yamasaki 2 +1  
Ibuki 1 -1  
Tanigaki 0 0  
Aso 0 -1  
Komura 1 0  
Nikai 1 +1  
Nonaffiliated 3 +3

N.B. Prime Minister Abe excluded. One New Komeito member and two politicians not included.

12) Unusually long time taken for "checkups"

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Excerpts)  
August 28, 2007

One of the buzzwords in the cabinet reshuffle this time was "politics and money." In Nagata-cho (Japan's political center), it took "unprecedentedly long time," according to a government source, to do a checkup on potential candidates for cabinet posts. If some problem was found with one candidate, even if it were a minor fault,



the candidate reportedly was removed from the list.

A symbolic case is former House of Councillors Tetsuro Yano of the Liberal Democratic Party, who was viewed as certain to join the cabinet but did not. Yano, upset at the decision, made a phone call to Chief Cabinet Secretary Kaoru Yosano last night, asking why he was not picked." Since Yosano gave no clear reply, Yano called a secretary to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Abe called back to Yano,

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saying: "A problem was found in a 'checkup (related to a politics and money problem)'

In the Abe cabinet, which was inaugurated last September, a number of politics-and-money scandals cropped up in succession. Should a new scandal involving a new cabinet member emerge, it might prove to be the administration's eventual downfall. The prime minister reportedly gave priority to "innocence" in selecting cabinet members.

13) First-time ministers decrease; Average age of cabinet ministers drops

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)  
August 28, 2008

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The number of first-time ministers of the reshuffled cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is seven (including non-politicians), down from the 11 -- the largest number -- after the realignment of central government offices in January 2001. Abe retained five ministers in their posts and appointed five lawmakers who had previously served in cabinet posts. Compared to the previous Abe cabinet, which was ridiculed as a cabinet made up of friends of Abe, the prime minister appears to have picked veteran lawmakers.

The average age of cabinet ministers is 60.4, which is six months younger than that of the previous cabinet. The youngest minister is Fumio Kishida, minister in charge of Okinawa and Northern Territories, while the oldest minister is Tetsuzo Fuyushiba, minister of land, infrastructure and transport.

Justice Minister Kunio Hatoyama has been elected 10 times to the House of Representatives, the most among the cabinet ministers. Yoko Kamikawa, state minister in charge of declining birthrate and gender-equality issues, is now serving in her third term, making her the shortest-serving Diet member in the cabinet. The average number of times elected to the Diet is 6.8 terms, almost the same as 6.5 terms of the previous cabinet.

The number of cabinet ministers who have served more terms than (Prime Minister Abe's five terms), is nine, down two from the previous cabinet. Of the 18 cabinet ministers, seven are now serving their eighth term in the Diet.

Two non-politicians -- Economic and Fiscal Policy Minister Hiroko Ota and Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Hiroya Masuda, the former Iwate governor -- were appointed.

Abe picked three Tsushima faction members, two members each from the Koga and Yamasaki factions, one member each from the Machimura, Ibuki, Komura, and Nikai factions, and three nonaffiliated persons as cabinet ministers. He did not name any members from the Tanigaki and Aso factions.

Six ministers -- the largest number -- are graduates of the University of Tokyo. Nine ministers graduated from national universities. The number of female ministers is two, the same number as that of the previous Abe cabinet.

14) Mori sarcastically portrays reshuffled cabinet as "being biased in favor of 'family' members"

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)  
August 28, 2007

Evaluation of the reshuffled cabinet and the new leadership of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party is divided even in the LDP.

Former Prime Minister Mori of the LDP yesterday said in a speech in Kobe City: "Mr. Ishihara (chair of the LDP Policy Research Council), Mr. Watanabe (Minister in Charge of Financial Services), and Mr. Amari (Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry) are left in the major posts. The previous cabinet had younger members called 'children' and it was called a 'cabinet of friends.' In other words, they were a group of 'juniors,' and the current one consists of a little bit 'older' friends." Mori thus sarcastically described the reshuffled cabinet as "being biased in favor of family members."

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Referring particularly to Policy Research Council Chairman Ishihara, Mori said: "If (Abe) intends to attach importance to rural areas, I hoped to see someone elected in a rural area be chosen as chair of the Policy Research Council Chairman. In this sense, it's bad."

Meanwhile, Secretary General Aso told reporters: "I think the reshuffled cabinet and the new LDP leadership would gradually widen support as time goes by."

15) Opposition parties all criticize reshuffled cabinet

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)  
August 28, 2007

Opposition parties yesterday all criticized the reshuffled cabinet and the new lineup of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). One opposition party leader said, "They can't change public sentiment." Ahead of an extraordinary session of the Diet to be convened in the fall, opposition parties are gearing up to pursue hard the government and the ruling bloc, including Prime Minister Abe, who reshuffled the cabinet and the LDP leadership, in terms of the ministers' qualifications for the posts.

The major opposition Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ or Minshuto) Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama said to reporters in Tokyo: "It's a

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surprise that there was no surprise regarding the selection." Also, Hatoyama stressed: "Mr. Taro Aso, who was the first to declare his support for Prime Minister Abe's intention to stay on in the post, and like-minded persons assumed the three top (LDP) posts, and the heads of factions have occupied the ministerial portfolios. These lineups can't change public sentiment."

When asked whether to respond to consultations between the ruling and opposition parties as called for by the ruling bloc over the question of how to manage the Diet from now on, Hatoyama noted: "If they expect to have the past consultations between the ruling and opposition parties, in which both sides argued against each other in public while being engaged in secret maneuvering behind the scenes, things are not that simple." Speaking of Hiroya Masuda, who was called a reformist governor and has now joined the reshuffled cabinet, Hatoyama expressed concern: "Once he became a cabinet member, he would be involved in sectionalism among ministries and agencies and he would be affected by government offices' way of thinking."

The Japanese Communist Party's Secretary General Tadayoshi Ichida criticized the reshuffled cabinet at a press conference: "It's a scratch cabinet by scraping up (kakiatsume) and bringing together (yoseatsume) hawkish persons to install them in key posts. The vogue expression at present is 'KY' (which means inability to sense the atmosphere). In the sense of kakiatsume and yoseatsume, I call the reshuffled cabinet the 'KY cabinet.'" The Social Democratic Party's head Mizuho Fukushima told a press briefing: "Former cabinet members are chosen to be ministers again but in different ministerial portfolios. In this sense, I call the reshuffled cabinet a 'seat-changing cabinet' or a 'deja vu cabinet.' We'll endeavor to make (this cabinet) the last one of the LDP."

The People's New Party's Secretary General Hisaoki Kamei casts doubt

on the reshuffled cabinet, by noting, "I don't think the policy direction will change." The New Party Nippon issued a statement in the name of Representative Yasuo Tanaka, in which Tanaka said: "Even

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if (Abe) simply declares he will continue reforms, if he fails to make clear for whom he continues reforms, the public will further move away from him."

16) China targeted MD info

SANKEI (Page 1) (Abridged)  
August 28, 2007

A Chinese national associated with his home government is alleged to have told a 56-year-old former Japanese trading company president to secure Japan's special defense secrets (tokubetsu boei himitsu). In this incident, China wanted to get confidential information about Japan's joint research with the United States on technologies for a missile defense (MD) system, sources revealed yesterday. The Chinese official is said to have asked for information about the MD research project and operational plans. The former trading house chief is also suspected of having received orders from the People's Liberation Army urging him to secure information. Police authorities will question the former president, suspecting him to have violated the Japan-US Information Security Law, which stipulates special defense secrets.

In March 2005, the police authorities searched the former trading company president's home and related locations to investigate information leakage involving a 65-year-old former engineering official of the Defense Agency, now the Defense Ministry. In that incident, the former engineering official was suspected of having removed documents for internal use only about the Maritime Self-Defense Force's submarines. At the time, the police seized directive documents written in Chinese with a description of information China wanted about the MD research project. The police later discovered that the directive documents had a description telling the former trading house chief to collect information falling under the category of special defense secrets.

The ex-trading house chief is alleged to have asked the former engineering official to provide a research paper on special steel used for submarine hulls. However, China needed it to improve the capabilities of its submarines, such as evading the MD dragnet to launch missiles from the sea. The research is closely related to Japan's joint research with the United States on MD systems.

17) Aegis data leaked by MSDF lieutenant: police

YOMIURI (Page 35) (Abridged)  
August 28, 2007

Kanagawa prefectural police and the Maritime Self-Defense Force's shore police have been investigating Aegis vessel data leaks from the MSDF. In this incident, they have concluded that a 48-year-old lieutenant, who was an instructor at the MSDF's 1st Service School, had removed a magnet-optical disk (MO) out of a desk of a 41-year-old lieutenant commander, who was the chief instructor at the service school. The lieutenant did not ask for the lieutenant commander's permission. The removed MO disk had contained data in the category of special defense secrets (tokubetsu boei himitsu). The lieutenant stated that he collected those data "for educational purposes." The lieutenant was later assigned to the DDG Shimakaze. The police have also discovered that the lieutenant had leaked data to crewmen on board the destroyer.

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The lieutenant-currently assigned to the Guided Weapons Education and Training Unit in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture-is suspected of having violated the Information Security Law, which is incident to the Japan-US Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement. Kanagawa police and MSDF investigative authorities will search the unit and the DDG

Shimakaze today to hurry up their final-stage investigations to indict the lieutenant and others involved in the incident.

According to investigations, the lieutenant removed an MO disk containing Aegis vessel data from the lieutenant commander's desk without permission between 2002 and 2003 when the lieutenant was an instructor at the 1st Service School. The lieutenant copied the data onto CDs, which were distributed to his students at the service school and others who were not authorized to access confidential information. He is therefore suspected of having leaked special defense secrets. In police questioning, the lieutenant stated that he removed the MO disk to collect data files for the purpose of using them in his class at the service school. He gave those data files to students. Asked why, he stated he thought the data files would be useful in the future. At the service school, chief instructors used to hand down Aegis vessel data and other data files to their successors. The MO disk removed by the lieutenant had contained highly confidential information secured by the lieutenant commander from an MSDF Program Service Unit person the lieutenant commander knows. The investigative authorities suspect that the information falls under the category of special defense secrets.

18) Kyodo News retracts report on Japan-North Korea talks

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 28, 2007

The Kyodo News Service yesterday retracted its report dispatched in the early hours of Aug. 27, citing a mistake in the report, in which Kyodo wrote that the ambassadors of Japan and North Korea held an informal meeting in Dalian, China.

The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs denied the report yesterday after reconfirming that Kyodo found that the person with whom it had interviewed was not the ambassador.

Kyodo's editor in chief Kenji Goto said: "There was a mistake in the report. We apologize to the ambassador and those concerned for causing inconveniences."

MESERVE